

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 718

INFO USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY BERN

S E C R E T SAIGON 14907

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PROF, PDIP, VS, SZ, UN

SUBJ: ATTEMPT OPEN PRG OFFICE GENEVA

REFS: A) SAIGON 14883; B) GENEVA 7238

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BAC THIS MORNING INFORMED ME OF WHAT HE HAD LEARNED OVER THE WEEKEND ABOUT ATTEMPTS TO SECURE SWISS GOVERNMENTAL APPROVAL. HIS INFORMATION LARGELY MATCHES THAT WHICH WE ALREADY HAVE WITH ONE EXCEPTION-WHICH WAS NEW TO ME.

2. BAC SAID HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT DEPUTY IN SWISS FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD RECOMMENDED APPROVAL BUT THAT MATTER WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO FEDERAL COUNCIL "IN A FEW DAYS". BAC SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTED GVN AMBASSADOR IN BERN TO INTERCEDE IN THE STRONGEST TERMS. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WAS UNSURE THIS WOULD BE DONE SINCE AMBASSADOR BUI VAN ANH DID NOT REALLY UNDERSTAND THE GRAVITY OF THE REPERCUSSIONS THAT WOULD INEVITABLY FLOW FROM SWISS APPROVAL OF THIS ACTION.

3. BASED ON REF B AND LAC'S COMMENTS IT WOULD SEEM THAT WE
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STILL HAVE SOME TIME, EVEN THOUGH VERY LIMITED, TO EXERT

MAXIMUM INFLUENCE ON SWISS TO DISAPPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE "PRG" LIAISON OFFICE IN GENEVA.

4. TECHNICALLY, ACCORDING TO REF B, WINSPEARE'S HANDLING OF THE MATTER PERMITS US TO ARGUE THAT NO UN REQUEST HAS BEEN MADE. THEREFORE, IT PERMITS US TO ARGUE LONG AND HARD WITH THE SWISS THAT APPROVAL UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE A GRATUITOUS BLOW TO A COUNTRY WITH WHICH THE SWISS HAVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND THAT THE USG SIMPLY WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND SUCH ACTION, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE UN HAS NOT REQUESTED IT.

5. WINSPEARE'S CAUTION IN PHRASING THE REQUEST MAY INDICATE UN RELUCTANCE TO GET TOO FAR OUT ON A LIMB IN VIEW OF OUR PREDICTABLE REACTION. FORTUNATELY, NEITHER THE UN NOR THE SWISS ARE YET IN THE POSITION OF PRESENTING US WITH A "FAIT ACCOMPLI".

6. THEREFORE, BAC BELIEVES WE HAVE TIME IF WE MOVE FAST. HE SAID HE ASSUMED WE WOULD DO SO, AND THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD INTERVENE PERSONALLY WITH IALDHEIM AND INSTRUCT EMBASSY IN BERN TO PROTEST TO THE SWISS GOVERNMENT IN THE STRONGEST TERMS. I SAID I WOULD REPORT HIS OBSERVATIONS IMMEDIATELY AND INFORM HIM OF ACTIONS WE HAVE TAKEN.

7. COMMENT: I ASSUME THAT WE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO STOP THIS RATHER SHABBY END RUN IN ITS TRACKS, BUT THE TIME ELEMENT IS RATHER IMPORTANT.
MARTIN

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NNN

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